

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1 to 3. (Canceled).

4. (Previously Presented) An implant assembly adapted to be fixed to a bone using at least one bone screw having a thinner region and a thicker region, which implant assembly comprises:

an implant member, which implant member has an aperture extending through the implant member, wherein the aperture includes a first region sized to permit the thinner region of the bone screw but not the thicker region of the bone screw to pass through and the aperture includes a second region sized to permit both the thinner region of the bone screw and the thicker region of the bone screw to pass through;

a first interior perimeter surface in the implant member defined by the first region of the aperture;

a second interior perimeter surface in the implant member defined by the second region of the aperture; and

a washer disposed within the aperture in the second region thereof, which washer has a hole large enough to permit both the thinner region of the bone screw and the thicker region of the bone screw to pass through and which washer has at least a first region with a first wall thickness and a second region with a second wall thickness, wherein the first wall thickness is greater than the second wall thickness;

wherein, when the bone screw is inserted in the aperture of the implant member and the hole of the washer such that the thicker region of the bone screw is in the second region of the aperture, rotation of the washer causes movement of the first region of the washer relative to the second interior perimeter surface such that the washer applies force to the bone screw to press the bone screw against the implant member and to fix the bone screw in orientation relative to the implant member;

wherein the second interior perimeter surface includes a recess in at least a portion thereof, and at least a portion of the washer enters the recess;

wherein the recess includes at least a first region and a second region, and wherein the recess is shallower in the first region than in the second region; and

wherein, when the bone screw is inserted in the aperture of the implant member and the hole of the washer such that the thicker region of the bone screw is in the second region of the aperture, rotation of the washer causes movement of the first region of the washer from the first region of the recess to the second region of the recess such that the washer applies force to the bone screw to press the bone screw against the implant member and to fix the bone screw in orientation relative to the implant member.

Claims 5 to 7. (Canceled).

8. (Previously Presented) An implant assembly adapted to be fixed to a bone using at least one bone screw having a thinner region and a thicker region, which implant assembly comprises:

an implant member, which implant member has an aperture extending through the implant member, wherein the aperture includes a first region sized to permit the thinner region of the bone screw but not the thicker region of the bone screw to pass through and the aperture includes a second region sized to permit both the thinner region of the bone screw and the thicker region of the bone screw to pass through;

a first interior perimeter surface in the implant member defined by the first region of the aperture;

a second interior perimeter surface in the implant member defined by the second region of the aperture; and

a washer disposed within the aperture in the second region thereof, which washer has a hole large enough to permit both the thinner region of the bone screw and the thicker region of the bone screw to pass through and which washer has at least a first region with a first wall thickness and a second region with a second wall thickness, wherein the first wall thickness is greater than the second wall thickness;

wherein, when the bone screw is inserted in the aperture of the implant member and the hole of the washer such that the thicker region of the bone screw

is in the second region of the aperture, rotation of the washer causes movement of the first region of the washer relative to the second interior perimeter surface such that the washer applies force to the bone screw to press the bone screw against the implant member and to fix the bone screw in orientation relative to the implant member;

wherein the implant assembly further comprises a detent disposed on the washer, and wherein the detent engages the second interior perimeter surface to provide sufficient friction to prohibit the washer from rotating due to contact with the bone screw as the bone screw is screwed into the bone.

9. (Original) The implant assembly of claim 8, further comprising an indentation in the second interior perimeter surface, wherein the detent engages the indentation to provide sufficient friction to prohibit the washer from rotating due to contact with the bone screw as the bone screw is screwed into the bone.

Claims 10 to 23. (Canceled).

24. (Previously Presented) An implant assembly adapted to be fixed to a bone using at least two bone screws, each of the bone screws having a thinner region and a thicker region, which implant assembly comprises:

an implant member, which implant member has a top surface and a bottom surface and which implant member has at least two apertures extending therethrough, wherein each aperture includes a lower region sized to permit the thinner region of one of the bone screws but not the thicker region of one of the bone screws to pass through, wherein each aperture includes an upper region sized to permit both the thinner region of one of the bone screws and the thicker region of one of the bone screws to pass through, and wherein the lower region of the aperture is adjacent the bottom surface of the implant member and the upper region of the aperture is adjacent the top surface of the implant member;

at least two lower interior perimeter surfaces in the implant member, each of which lower interior perimeter surfaces is defined by the lower region of a respective one of the apertures;

at least two upper interior perimeter surfaces in the implant member, each of which upper interior perimeter surfaces is defined by the upper region of a

respective one of the apertures; and

at least two washers each of which washers is disposed within the upper region of a respective one of the apertures, wherein each washer has a hole large enough to permit both the thinner region of one of the bone screws and the thicker region of one of the bone screws to pass through, wherein each washer has at least a first region with a first wall thickness and a second region with a second wall thickness, and wherein the first wall thickness is greater than the second wall thickness;

wherein each upper interior perimeter surface includes a recess in at least a portion thereof;

wherein at least a portion of each washer enters a respective one of the recesses;

wherein each recess includes at least a first region and a second region such that each recess is shallower in the first region than in the second region;

wherein, when each of the bone screws is inserted in a respective aperture of the implant member and a hole of a respective one of the washers such that the thicker region of the bone screw is in the upper region of the aperture, rotation of the washer causes movement of the first region of the washer from the first region of the respective recess to the second region of the recess such that the washer applies force to the bone screw to press the bone screw against the implant member and to fix the bone screw in orientation relative to the implant member;

wherein the implant assembly further comprises a detent disposed on each of the washers, and wherein each detent engages a respective upper interior perimeter surface to provide sufficient friction to prohibit each washer from rotating due to contact with a respective bone screw as the bone screw is screwed into the bone.

25. (Original) The implant assembly of claim 24, further comprising an indentation in each of the second interior perimeter surfaces, wherein a respective detent engages a respective indentation to provide sufficient friction to prohibit each washer from rotating due to contact with a respective bone screw as the bone screw is screwed into the bone.

Claims 26 to 79. (Canceled).